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ABSTRACT

Described is the development and some of the operations of the San Diego Energy Policy Planning Forum. The basic intent of the Forum was to provide a means to present the background information and various viewpoints of our energy past, present, and future. Examples o. activities that were initiated as a consequence of the Forum are listed. (RH)

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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN PROBLEMS OF ENERGY AND GROWTH IN SAN DIEGO

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Compared to the rest of the nation, San Diego has an atypical end-use energy distribution pattern; over 40 percent is in transportation, and over 20 percent is used by the residential community. The remainder is split between industrial, commercial, and government users. Thus, approximately 65 percent of San Diego's end-use energy is intimately connected with the daily energy lifestyles of San Diegans. It may not be surprising, therefore, that an increasing number of concerned private citizens, as well as institutional representatives, have become involved in community oriented energy programs.

As director of the KPBS-TV Science Office*, I have the view that regional public television is a multi-faceted community resource that may be utilized in a number of non-media activities to improve communications between various groups within the San Diego community. In the past two years, the Science Office has been endeavoring to not only improve the public's understanding of science and technology, but to also help upgrade the level of public policy debates and analyses by involving the scientific community more directly in the public arena. We have brought scientists and engineers together with citizen groups and individuals

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* KPBS Science Office, now an integral part of KPBS-TV (Public Broadcasting in San Diego) was established in December, 1973 under a two-year grant from the National Science Foundation (NSF).

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interested in public problems with a strong scientific or technical component. This approach has the important extra advantage that the scientists and engineers, often from the academic community, acquire "real world" exposure and a sensitivity to the non-technical components of a policy issue.

Clearly, the energy problem has created policy issues and public program ideas that make it especially appropriate for such community involvement activities. My colleague, Susan Pollock and I have, in fact, been concentrating our attention on this vital area. In early 1974, Richard Stephens, former NSF program manager for the Office of the Public Understanding of Science, suggested that I confer with AAAS representatives on the newly developing regional seminar program. The result has been a series of workshops, seminars, and forums focused on the San Diego energy picture. In the earlier meetings, a hard corps group of energy activists were identified, and a number of promising energy action program ideas were promulgated--unfortunately, no concrete action directly resulted from the earlier sessions. That is not to say that the meetings were a failure, but that the results were diffusional in nature. For example:

1. The Mayor's Office and County Board of Supervisors were made energy conscious; members and staff participated in our deliberations, but indecision and the politically unattractive nature of various energy program suggestions resulted in a bare minimum of action.
2. A County Energy Coordinator was appointed but became lost in the local government bureaucracy. Much later, a similar

position was created in the city government.

3. City energy and county energy statements were developed for incorporation into the general planning documents.
4. The local utility was encouraged to maintain an active conservation program (and has continued to do so).
5. Other energy groups became more vocal and active (A school program on energy education was initiated, a number of citizen's groups to combat high energy prices were established, and rapid transit became the subject of intense political debate).
6. A small cadre of activists were made aware that conservation is a readily available source of energy.

This may sound impressive, but it could be argued that the earlier seminars and workshops were not the primary motivation for these activities. Moreover, the degree to which energy action programs affected the basic picture of energy end-use in San Diego is best illustrated by the fact that there was only a small net slow-down in San Diego's electric energy consumption from a pre-1973 oil embargo growth rate of 7 percent per year to our current rate of 5 percent per year. The bulk of this savings, however, has not been attributed by San Diego Gas and Electric Co. (SDG&E) to the economic slow down and not to long lasting conservation efforts.

The combination of an aroused, hard corps group of public-spirited citizens and the return to energy normalcy, provided the stimulus for another attempt at catalyzing energy action programs and policy studies

via a regional energy conference in San Diego.

To make a long story short, allow me to briefly review the organizational milestones in the development of what came to be known as the San Diego Energy Policy Planning Forum. An organizing committee was established with representatives from various sectors in the energy community (See Appendix A). Notable members of the group, from a community involvement viewpoint, were Mr. Ron Frankum, Executive Director of the Urban Observatory and Mr. Mike Madigan, assistant to the Mayor and Chairman of the Urban Observatory's E-Group (E for energy). The Urban Observatory was originally funded by the Department of Housing and Urban Development to provide a bridge between technical excellence centers (at universities, etc.) and the local governmental agencies. It has since developed into a joint effort by the City of San Diego, the University of California, San Diego, and San Diego State University. It is attempting to formulate and initiate action programs in a number of areas to supplement an on-going University Research Program. One of these is in the general field of regional energy programs, referred to as the E-Group. The inclusion of Messrs. Frankum and Madigan at the early stages of Forum planning resulted in the active participation and support of the E-Group staff, so that the Urban Observatory became a co-sponsor of the Forum. This provided an institutional means by which Forum proceedings could be published and resultant follow-up activities monitored. Moreover, the Urban Observatory's commitment to become a non-profit energy information and action program center for the San Diego region could be used to

translate Forum ideas into energy action programs for San Diego.

As chairman of the organizing committee, I distributed copies of the Ford Foundation's Energy Policy Project's summary report, A Time to Choose, and some of the more detailed policy studies. Along with this, a tentative program was established, using the Energy Policy Project's conclusions and recommendations as the springboard for the proposed debate. Basically, the original concept was to convene three sessions on:

1. The current status of energy use and supply in San Diego
2. The San Diego energy future
3. Regional energy policy for San Diego

After a number of meetings, the organizing committee decided that maximum information transmission and participation could be achieved if we compressed the formats of each session so that the three areas would be covered in half-day sessions. Thus, the Forum was designed as a sequence of evening, morning, and afternoon meetings to be held 14-15 January, 1976. At this point, session chairmen were appointed by the organizing committee, with each chairman given the responsibility of making final selections for speakers and panelists, as well as conducting the actual session. I might add that invitations to attend and participate in the Forum were extended to almost 200 San Diegans. A total of 81 people actually attended. AAAS funds (from a Ford Foundation grant) off-set some of the organizational costs, but all registrants contributed a fee of $25. to cover the two dinners, proceedings, and other expenses.

The basic intent of the San Diego Energy Policy Planning Forum was to provide a means to air the background information and various viewpoints on our energy past, present, and future. These are required in order to identify both the bounds of controversy and areas of consensus for a regional energy policy. The Forum was hoped to be a significant contribution to the further development of a San Diego energy community wherein the special problem posed by the world-wide, national, and regional energy situation could be discussed and analyzed in public proceedings for the public welfare.

The speakers, panelists and participants in the San Diego Energy Policy Planning Forum included representatives from all levels of government, the local utilities, San Diego energy and transportation planners, and a number of energy managers from local institutions. It was a hectic, fast-paced series of meetings, the results of which are still being pondered by all concerned. Professor Dorothy Nelkin of Cornell University was asked to observe the sessions and make a report on the Forum approach to improving community involvement in regional energy programs. Some of her remarks are included in Appendix B. I recommend that you read them, as they provide a more detached view of the proceedings.

My impressions of what happened at the Forum are analogus to the mutterings of the airline pilot who reports some bad news and some good news to the passengers. "First the bad news...we're lost; now the good news...we're making good time!"

So, first let me relate some of the "bad news." It was clearly established in the sessions that recent national energy policy decisions

by the President, ERDA, and the Congress are not received as final, definitive statements of a coherent energy strategy. At the state level, California energy policy is still being formulated and will not be made public until January, 1977 when the California Energy Commission is required to submit state energy plans and guidelines. Presently, California's energy policy is a pragmatic blend of short-term programs developed by the California Energy Commission and the Public Utilities Commission. Locally, there is no identifiable governmental policy on energy (conservation or supply), other than low-key efforts to provide conservation in city and county activities and facilities.

The participating federal and state agencies' representatives concurred that regional energy programs must be part of national and state efforts, but they were not able to identify recommended guidelines, funds, or other means of support for such efforts. Thus, the indecision at the federal and state energy policy-making levels is reflected in the lip-service type of support given to regional or local energy action projects. Although there is stated interest in regions, the proof will be in the financial pudding.

From a policy viewpoint, therefore, we are"lost." That's not all the bad news concerning the Forum, but allow me to break some of the good news. It was quite evident that the Forum brought together for the first time, many people from the San Diego energy policy, planning, and user communities. This had the rewarding effect that participants were able to identify with an impartial, energy-oriented citizens group that shared a common interest in regional energy problems. Many of the participants met people, who up until the Forum, had been just a voice at

at the other end of the telephone line.

The information exchange at the Forum was also impressive. The program was geared to provide updates on energy projects and studies at the national, state, and regional levels of energy action. Transcripts of the presentations and the discussions are currently being edited by session chairmen and the San Diego Urban Observatory. They will be published in the proceedings of the Forum.

It was clear that smaller energy action groups had coalesced during the sessions. In terms of energy policy recommendations and action programs -- teams of four to eight individuals are able to agree on project objectives and activities, without the cumbersome requirements of formal membership in a larger group. Thus, it was a consensus of the participants that the Forum should continue with its objective being to provide a public meeting place for the open discussion of energy policy suggestions and action programs that affect San Diego. It could also provide leadership, coordination and administrative support to pilot projects as they develop, and make arrangements for group presentations to specific audiences (e.g., the City Council, etc.). The Urban Observatory has agreed to make the Forum a part of its E-Group program plan. This acknowledgement that small, action-oriented groups are the strength of San Diego's regional energy action programs should be stressed as a concept that could be appropriate to other communities.

Examples of activities that have been initiated as a consequence (either partial or total) of the Forum gathering are:

*The lack of solar energy utilization at school and governmental

facilities is being investigated by a group that includes an architect, an energy manager, a solar energy manufacturer, and a concerned citizen-environmentalist. This group will present their results and recommendations to local school boards and government officials.

*A group of energy managers from local government and major institutions has developed a means of sharing technical information and ideas for conservation program implementation.

*Planners and participants in the development of city and county plans for energy conservation and growth have incorporated ideas presented and/or discussed at the Forum in their policy/plan recommendations to local government.

*A small group of energy activists, with the participation of SDG&E is exploring the possibility of a new energy budget service to be provided by the local utility. This could result in a pilot program to evaluate the feasibility and effectiveness of providing the public with updated information on their total energy utilization each month.

There were other activities, and new "action teams" are forming as the San Diego energy community undergoes what may be referred to as a nucleation process. I should also add that we plan to dedicate a significant part of the KPBS-TV Science Office spring programming to the question of energy growth in San Diego and the debate over the Nuclear Safeguards Initiative.

It would not be entirely appropriate to end this paper on the encouraging notes struck by some of these results. We had a number of problems in the organization, execution, and follow-up to the Forum.

A number of these are covered in the appended note by Professor Dorothy Nelkin.

The entire energy community was not truly represented at the meetings. Specifically, it proved difficult to obtain participation by members of the anti-high energy price citizens groups, the environmentalists' community, the Coastal Commission, and the banking community. Minority groups and the poor were under-represented. The reasons vary in each case, but these deficiencies must be overcome if the words "public" and "open" are to have real meaning to the Energy Forum.

Our formats were geared too much towards information, not leaving enough time for discussion of the many intriguing ideas and concepts introduced at the sessions. A number of striking examples come to mind. Is there a conflict of interest between the state licensing private utilities to produce electric power and to provide natural gas, on the one hand; and requiring them to promote energy conservation on the other? The relationship between energy growth and economic growth was not definitively discussed; even though SDG&E representatives made it exceedingly clear that the basis of their long-term energy planning is to provide for economic and population expansion, as well as per capita increases in energy consumption. By providing for such growth, with or without stringent conservation requirements, are we in fact <u>forcing</u> growth? Perhaps most important to San Diego is personal transportation. Although many suggestions were introduced, the lack of discussion and significant follow-up activity in this area (that accounts for over 40 percent of energy end-use) was indicative that the participants, like the general western public, are unable to "feel comfortable" with a life style change

that takes them out of their automobiles.

While there was general agreement that a Forum activity should be continued, the larger group was not able to agree on energy action programs or concrete energy policy statements. I do not interpret this as a negative result, but as a definite indication that at the present time, community energy action programs in San Diego can best be initiated and conducted by smaller, goal-oriented groups. If there was an implicit consensus at the Forum, it was that such groups can out-perform a large, ad hoc ensemble.

Thus, the San Diego Regional Energy Forum's primary objective, now, is to provide the environment and interested resource people for such groups to work and get their message to both the public and decision makers. There are many unanswered questions about the ideal or optimum space/time path for the Energy Forum and its related activities, but the concept is developing into a workable means of providing the interested public and technical communities an outlet for participation in regional energy policy planning.

APPENDIX A

San Diego Energy Policy Forum -- Organizing Committee

Chairman -

Dr. Jeffrey W. Kirsch, KPBS Science Office

Members -

Mr. Kenneth Brunot -- West Coast Project Officer, National Science Foundation

Mr. Ron Frankum -- Executive Director, San Diego Urban Observatory

Dr. John Howe -- UCSD Energy Center

Dr. Paul Hurley -- Naval Undersea Center

Mr. Larry Icerman -- UCSD Energy Center

Mr. Mike Madigan -- Assistant to the Mayor of San Diego

Dr. Alan D. Pasternak -- Commissioner, California Energy Resources, Conservation, and Development Commission

Mr. William Pettus -- Energy Management Coordinator, UCSD

APPENDIX B

Excerpts from a critical review of the Forum by Professor Dorothy Nelkin (Cornell University), submitted 19 January 1976 (Professor Nelkin's complete review will be published in the Forum proceedings and is also available from the KPBS Science Office)

The San Diego Energy Policy Planning Forum brought together members of the "energy community" in the San Diego region to air national and local energy problems and to discuss the potential for developing a coordinated regional policy. The goal was to stimulate a long-term regional energy action program and to explore possible institutional forms through which coordinated energy policy and priorities could be mediated.

The Energy Community

Both participants (speakers and panelists) and invitees represented groups defined as "the energy community" -- that is, people who were primarily responsible for energy supply and regulation, or those in positions permitting them to initiate conservation measures. Thus, participants included: 7 people from city and county government or related departments, 2 from the Navy, 8 representing federal or state agencies, 3 representing the local utility (SDG&E) and 7 academics. Invitees included about 5 from city and county government, 12 academics, 27 from local industry including the Navy and several consulting firms, 11 from city or county planning departments, 8 from the utility, 7 from state and federal agencies, and 5 from environmental or citizen groups

and local professional societies (3 of these were from a solar energy group apparently with marketing interests).

There were several conspicuous absences if one were to identify a community of people very directly affected by and affecting energy policy; the financial community whose financing policies directly determine energy demand, and labor with its strong stake in continued development with its implications for energy demand. There were no representatives from the Coastal Commission despite its leverage over siting of new energy facilities. Finally, citizens groups were not well represented except for a solar energy group; nor did those attending participate -- somewhat surprising considering their activities in the area. There is in San Diego, for example, an active concern with nuclear power plant siting and a forthcoming statewide referendum that would restrict the construction of nuclear plants pending full-scale safety testing and approval by two-thirds of the state legislature. Discussion with citizen-group representatives suggested that they felt that the forum provided them insufficient opportunity to participate --"It is not a group that will listen because they regard environmental concerns as foot-dragging." "There was insufficient time to respond during the discussion." "Since the detailed program was not available in advance, and no environmentalists were speakers or panelists, we could not prepare our position." In fact, the conference chairman encouraged the Sierra Club representative to respond but he did not.

The definition of the "energy community" assured a great deal of consensus at the forum, but it precluded dealing with some of the value conflicts that this evaluator feels must be eventually considered

and aired if an effective local action program is to be implemented.

The Function and Faults of the Forum

The San Diego Energy Policy Forum was useful in bringing together people in key city and county positions who had clearly never sat down and listened to each other, despite the related character of their activities. The discussion served the important purpose of information, education and "consciousness raising." It placed a complex and fragmented picture into a total perspective, and seeded a number of ideas and possibilities which could eventually develop into specific policies and activities if the sponsors follow up the forum in a number of ways. They intend to publish and distribute proceedings, to prepare a TV report, and to send a special report to city government. In addition, it would be useful to cull from the proceedings a list of specific and concrete proposals for policy and institutional changes and their objectives (e.g., Energy Impact Statements, social management taxes to stimulate high-occupancy vehicle use, car pools, incentive tax breaks for solar alternatives, a regional energy board responsible for monitoring new developments and for coordinating energy-related activities, etc.). Once listed, it is necessary to propose means to implement these ideas and to systematically assess their own impacts, for policies as well as technologies have impacts that may be unanticipated and unintended. In this respect, more careful attention must be paid to the economic and employment effects of energy policy in future discussions.

One of the original goals of the forum was to pin down "points of contention." This was not fulfilled, yet remains important if the

intended coordination of activities is to be effective. In some areas there is consensus -- e.g., that school construction programs should be built with consideration of energy use. And everyone agreed that some policies must be developed and "action taken." But the apparent consensus at the meeting concerning proposals such as transportation alternatives, car pooling, incentive taxes, and more stringent building codes seemed to this observer more politeness than accord. The idea of car pools was mentioned and lauded again and again, but no one raised the fact that to date numerous efforts to organize car pooling in San Diego had failed -- and that attitudes were such that individuals' commuting rights in San Diego are regarded as a form of personal liberty and that single occupancy vehicles prevail. No one suggested that implementation of energy-saving proposals are bound to be extremely contentious if they interfere with the environmental ethos, industrial efficiency, the cost concerns of developers, or the autonomy of individuals. Neglect of these problems in part was a consequence of the effort to be comprehensive and informative. Also, for political reasons, the forum tried to include representatives and information from <u>every</u> agency. As a result, sessions were way overbooked. There was insufficient time for questions or discussion and the chairmen themselves were not inclined to raise difficult questions. Thus, those few questions that were raised tended to focus on technical details: "What will x cost?" "How is it designed?" The energy problem, however, is not only a technical or scientific issue in which consensus based on "truth" can ultimately be reached. It is also a political issue requiring negotiation and compromise among conflicting and often irreconcilable

interests. Thus, in the future, difficult areas of political and social conflict in San Diego must be more directly confronted and aired if indeed effective energy action programs are to be implemented.